

An Essay
on
Stramonium

Respectfully submitted to the
Faculty of the
Homoeopathic Medical College
of
Pennsylvania

On the 10th day of January

One thousand eight hundred and fifty two
By

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of
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Penn^a

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Datura Stramonium is known
in this country by the name of James
-town weed so called from its hav-
-ing been first discovered near
that town in Virginia.

It is known in England
by the name Thornapple.

It is said to be a matter
of doubt as to what country it
originally belonged.

Some contend that it is a
native of North America while
others refer it to Europe.

The seeds are very retentive
of life so that when placed in fa-
-vourable circumstances after
having been carried great dis-
tances on ship board or in any
other manner they readily spring

up and reproduce themselves in great abundance so that they might soon be scattered over a vast extent of country after having been first introduced.

It can be found almost every where in the United States where the soil is cultivated and enriched by manure or by the refuse of towns and villages. about which it can be seen in abundance on the commons.

The Stramonium is an annual plant which grows very luxuriantly. especially in rich soils. where it often attains the height of six feet.

The root is of a fibrous texture large size and of a whitish colour.

The plant has a round stalk
of a smooth appearance single at
its base or lower part and di-
viding into many branches above.

Its leaves are triangular with
rough or toothed edges of a dark green
colour on the top and pale or light
coloured on the underside.

The flowers which ap-
pear from May to August are "large
axillary, solitary and peduncled,
having a tubular pentangular
five toothed calyx and a funnel
shaped corolla with a long tube
and waved plaited border
terminating in five acuminate
teeth."

The superior portion of
the outer covering of the flower

is cast off with the deciduous parts while the inferior portion is retained, and encloses the fruit.

This resembles in form an egg and is covered with sharp spines. It opens at its summit and contains four cells with as many valves.

The seeds are very numerous and are attached to receptacles running longitudinally with the cells.

The entire plant is medicinal. The ^{root} leaves and seeds are directed to be used for medicinal purposes by the U. S. Pharmacopoeia. After it has flowered the leaves may be gathered at any time before

the autumnal frosts.

The seeds and fruit are more active than any other part of the plant.

Cases of poisoning by this plant often occur where it grows.

It produces dizziness of the head, dimness and at times total loss of sight, fixed and dilated pupils, a peculiar wild staring expression of countenance, flushed face with general convulsions of the muscles.

The pulse is at times slow and full at others very much accelerated.

It also produces raving delirium, incoherence with loss of speech and paralysis.

Children poisoned with the seeds often put out their hands and manifest great fear of falling.

It has also been observed to produce redness of the skin with an eruption.

Persons resort to poisoning with stramonium by rolling the seeds or leaves up in cigars for their victims to smoke.

An application of the bruised leaves fruit or seeds to an incised or lacerated wound may produce the symptoms of poisoning.

Persons have been known to die within six hours after taking the poison.

After death the brain and its membranes are found congested.

and firm - the ventricles containing serum - a flaccid state of the heart and the substance of the lungs very vascular

Its active property is said to consist of the Alkaloida. turia. about one per-cent of the dried vegetable being composed of it. The alkaloid crystallizes in prisms having four right angles.

For Homoeopathic use it is prepared from the seeds in the same manner as other dry vegetables are viz. by adding one part of the powder of the pulverized seeds to ten parts of Alcohol permitting it to stand about two weeks in a well stopped bottle - to be shaken

occasionally and afterwards filtrated.

Antidotes

Nuc. Vom. Gab. Acet. Succi citr.
and Berb.

December 15th 1857 Took five drops
of the Mother tincture at 7 O'clock A. M.

At 10 O'clock felt beating in
forehead and balls of the eyes. Also
a feeling of enlargement and pro-
trusion of eye-balls.

Jerking of the Muscles of the arms
followed immediately by darting pains
through the forehead.

At 12 O'clock Searing pain in right
ear with shooting through the forehead
and top of head. Dartings through
the head in different directions
extending to the balls of the eyes and
down the right-side of the nose.

1 O'clock P.M. Sharp twinging pains
near the internal condyle of the os
humeri. Constant throbbing in
the head - deep seated. Dimness of
sight as though the atmosphere
was foggy.

Jerking twinging pains in Mus-
cles and tendons of back side of the
forearm ^{left arm} extending to the index finger.

4 O'clock P.M. sense of fulness in head
beating in the top of head & forehead
felt also in balls of the eyes.

Throbbing pain in molar teeth
of left side in lower jaw and in
the submaxillary glands of the same
side.

The pulse is more full than usual
and beats ten or twelve times more
in a minute than common.

8 O'clock Fulness of bloodvessels of
the conjunctiva and sclerotics, the
eyes look red. particularly near the
internal canthus

A feeling of soreness in the balls
of the eyes on turning them.

9 O'clock Frequent sneezing

16th Dec. Morning - did not
rest well frequent waking. obliged to
void urine four times during the
night. Frequent starts and wandering,
indistinct dreams.

10 O'clock Heavy beating in the ar-
teries felt particularly in the
head and chest. Pulse fifteen
beats in each minute more than
the natural standard and very full
& heavy

11 O'clock The throbbing in balls of the

eyes returns worse in left one - with
lacrimation.

Also throbbing in teeth and lower
jaw - left side after omitting

The foregoing mentioned symp-
toms gradually disappeared so that
after four days felt none of them

Dec 28

Commenced taking the Medicine a-
gain. Took a dose every morning about
half an hour before eating - beginning
with three drops for a dose and by de-
grees increasing until I took twenty
drops at one dose

During Felt the same symptoms as
before though not so severe. Also had shooting and gri-
ping pains in the bowels with
looseness. The loose state of the

12
bowels attended with flatulence
& borborygmi with occasionally
sharp pains in them continued
nearly a week after omitting
the medicine

Also a continual ringing
in the ears - worse in the left one.

Respectfully Submitted
Leonard Pratt

Owing to a want of sufficient length
of time to get the pathogenesis of the remedy
fully there are not as many symptoms
as would otherwise appear - which
I very much regret

S. P.